

# Memorial Day

## *An Interpretation*

---

**An Address**

**By**

**R. D. W. Connor**

**May 11, 1909**



# MEMORIAL DAY

## AN INTERPRETATION

# AN ADDRESS

BY

R. D. W. CONNOR

BEFORE

THE JOHN W. DUNHAM CHAPTER OF THE  
UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE  
CONFEDERACY

AT WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA

MAY 11, 1909

Printed and Distributed by  
HENRY G. CONNOR  
as a Tribute  
to the Soldiers of the Confederacy  
from Wilson County,  
North Carolina

DEDICATED  
TO THE  
MEN OF WILSON COUNTY  
SOLDIERS  
IN  
"THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES"  
1861-1885

In war, brave and faithful  
In peace, loyal and lawabiding  
Patriotic, always

2  
3  
12

“WHO SAVES HIS COUNTRY SAVES HIMSELF, SAVES ALL THINGS, AND ALL THINGS SAVED DO BLESS HIM. WHO LETS HIS COUNTRY DIE LETS ALL THINGS DIE, DIES HIMSELF IGNOBLY, AND ALL THINGS DYING CURSE HIM.”—BENJAMIN H. HILL.

## MEMORIAL DAY: AN INTERPRETATION

---

In the midst of an age inspired with the spirit of a living Present, and cheered with the hopefulfulness of those who fight and win, we pause to-day to commune for a brief moment with a Past that is dead, and to pay tribute to the memory of those who fought and lost. Truly a paradoxical situation! And yet, perhaps, not so very paradoxical after all, for these Memorial Day ceremonies have a much deeper meaning than may at first appear. The Past is dead, and yet it lives; our fathers lost, and yet they won. And to-day we come to review not the dead, but the living Past; to commemorate not the defeat, but the victory of the vanquished. Looking back over the Past we see in the American Civil War, underneath all the blare of bugles and the roar of cannon, the conflict of two great ideas. Behind the Stars and Stripes of Lincoln and Grant we see arrayed the idea of Nationality; behind the Stars and Bars of Davis and Lee, the idea of sovereign Statehood. Looking out into the Future we see the day when the historian, coming to pronounce his judgment on the results of that conflict, will declare that in the end both ideas were triumphant, for out of that struggle came a more perfect and a more enduring Union, and out of it came a freer and a nobler State. Now happily no longer in conflict, State and Union move along their destined paths to a common heritage of liberty and truth and justice for all mankind. In this happy consummation both Federal and Confederate have their allotted parts to play.

The Confederate soldier, as I have said, represented the idea of sovereign Statehood. In defense of this idea thousands of men died on the field of battle; and for it to-day



other thousands rejoice in an opportunity to live. What then is this thing for which men are so willing to give their lives? What do we mean by the State? By the State I mean something more than acres of land and millions of people; something more than constitutions and laws, than governors and legislatures, than courts and constables and prisons. I mean something more than material wealth and political power. The State of North Carolina is not the fifty-two thousand square miles of territory lying between Virginia and South Carolina, the Atlantic and the Blue Ridge; nor is it the two millions of people whose homes are here. The State is not to be found in the capitol at Raleigh, nor in the court-houses of our ninety-eight counties. Soil and climate, field and forest, rivers and mountains, mills and factories, cottages and mansions, schools and churches,—all these are but outward and visible forms of the real, living State. The first white men who settled on our shores three hundred years ago found the same fifty-two thousand square miles of territory stretching out before them; the same rivers pouring their waters into the same sea; the same mountain ranges lifting their lofty peaks up into the same blue sky. They found forests growing then as they grow now. They cleared fields and built houses. They too had a constitution and laws, a governor and a law-making body. All these things they had in substance as we have them now. They had the possibilities of a State, but they did not have the State itself, much less did they have the State of North Carolina to which we acknowledge allegiance. If these things constituted the real State, it would be but a dead thing, the same yesterday, to-day and forever.

But the State is not a dead thing. It is a living, breathing, changing organism, never to-day what it was yesterday, and never to be to-morrow what it is to-day. The State of 1909



is not the State of 1809. Every generation in the Past has added its contribution, modifying its character and changing its ideals; and every generation in the Future must contribute something for good or ill. As Dr. McIver used to say : "Sometimes we think it is a pity that a good man who has learned to be of service to his fellows should be called out of the world. So sometimes we may think about an enterprising and useful generation; but after all the generations of men are but relays in civilization's march on its journey from savagery to the millennium. Each generation owes it to the Past and to the Future that no previous worthy attainment or achievement, whether of thought or deed or vision, shall be lost. It is also under the highest obligation to make at least as much progress on the march as has been made by any generation that has gone before." In the contributions of all the generations that have gone before us, and in the contributions that we shall make to the generations that shall come after us, we find the real State.

Let us suppose it were possible to blot out of our life all the story of the Past; all memory of the men and events, the thoughts and ideals that have made us what we are today; all record of the purposes and the sufferings of those who planted the first colony on the banks of the Albemarle; all knowledge of their long struggle to rescue that region from savage beasts and barbarous men; all memory of the ambitions and the ideals that inspired them in their battles for independence and self-government; all record of their plans and labors to build here a free, happy and prosperous commonwealth, all the story of their heroic struggle to maintain its sovereignty and to defend it from invasion; all knowledge of the motives and purposes that nerved them in their efforts to reconstruct it on a broader and a nobler plan;

suppose we should lose out of our life all our fathers' ideals of liberty and law, all memory of their successes and failures, their hopes and ambitions, their customs, traditions and history,—what would we have left of the State which they founded? A vain, hollow, empty thing, dead materialism, not the State which commands our allegiance and our service. That State we find in the hearts and minds of the people; in all they have been in the Past; in all they are in the Present; in all they hope to be in the Future; in the memories of the men and events by which in peace and in war, in the council chamber and on the battle-field, we have won our place among the people of the American Union; in the ideals upon which the State was founded by the fathers, and in the aspirations that stir in us a desire to serve the State and worthily to maintain what they have nobly secured.

Such was the Confederate soldier's conception of the State, and as it was his duty and privilege to defend it so it is ours to preserve and hand it down unimpaired to his children forever. For this purpose, that we may the better fulfill this duty and annually pass in review what the State has been in the Past, consider what it is in the present, and forecast what we shall make it in the Future, we have set apart this Memorial Day and dedicated it to the study of the State and her history.

The first purpose of Memorial Day, then, is to keep fresh in our minds what the State has been in the Past, and surely it would be hard for one who loves his State to find a more important or a more pleasing task. A generation ago it was a favorite boast with us in the South that we had been too busy making history to give thought to writing it. But when we come to think of the State as the Confederate soldier thought of it, we shall understand that as each generation

is under obligations to make at least as much progress on the march of civilization as any generation that has gone before, so also it is under no less an obligation to preserve the record of its progress for the benefit of generations that shall come after; for as history is the foundation of all knowledge, and the measure of all progress, so a failure to record the events of history would result in setting each generation back to the point from which its predecessor started, and would close to posterity the source of its richest treasures. Modesty is no doubt a commendable trait in the character of any people, but a sober, reasonable and intelligent pride in the achievements of one's country is the best incentive to public virtue and real patriotism; and a people who have not the pride to record their history will not long have the virtue to make history that is worth recording.

But I speak now of a State-pride that is sober, reasonable and intelligent, for certainly there is nothing either patriotic or elevating in that foolish, extravagant and boastful pride that provoked Kipling's famous prayer:

“If drunk with sight of power, we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—  
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,  
Or lesser breeds without the law—  
For frantic boast and foolish word,  
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord!”

Such a pride develops neither virtue nor patriotism. It only excites the ridicule of the world, and brings shame on the good name of the State. It places false values on unworthy things, and degrades the character of the people. It produces the self-contentment of “provincial complacency,” and destroys manly vigor and ambition. It is to be avoided as the worst enemy of true State-pride. Rather let us use Memorial Day to cultivate a sober pride of country, which

holding itself in proper reserve ever stands guard over the true honor and welfare of the State; a reasonable pride of country, which knowing the difference between the good and the evil, the true and the false, the beautiful and the ugly in the life of the State will accept the one and reject the other; an intelligent pride of country, which desiring to serve the State, will follow the injunction of England's great laureate:

“Love thou thy land, with love far-brought  
From out the storied Past, and used  
Within the Present, but transfused  
Thro' future time by power of thought.”

Nothing will produce better results among a self-governing people than the cultivation of such a pride in the achievements of their country. The great events in the history of such a country are the achievements of the people themselves. A Russian czar may issue his decree bestowing the privilege of a free Parliament on his subjects and is entitled to claim all the credit as his own; but when an American Congress promulgates a Declaration of Independence, or an American president emancipates three millions of slaves, it is not the Congress nor the President, but the people themselves who speak. The Confederate soldier who answered the call of his country in 1861, and through four long years of war wrote his unsurpassed record of devotion to duty, of courage in the field, of endurance in suffering, of patience in defeat, of fidelity in temptation, of loyalty in the hour of trial, won for himself a place in history beside the imperial legionary of Cæsar and the old guardsman of Napoleon; but the glory of the Roman legionary and the glory of the French guardsman belong to them alone, the glory of the Confederate soldier belongs to his country. So too the great men in a Republic of self-governing people spring from among the people

themselves, and in a Republic no man is counted great by the accident of birth, but only by reason of eminent services to his fellow countrymen. Every man feels, therefore, that what other men have been and done, he himself may be and do. The fame of a Cæsar or a Napoleon is his own; but the fame of Lincoln and Davis, of Lee and Grant, of McClellan and Jackson, belongs to the American people. When, therefore, we turn aside from our daily affairs to commemorate the great events in our history, it is but an endeavor on our part to take an inventory of the best that we ourselves have been able to contribute to the making of the State; and when we offer tribute to the great men of the State, we simply pay tribute to the highest types that we ourselves have been able to develop, for our own character is reflected in the character of the men whose memories we revere, whose lives we study, and whose virtues we admire.

This, then, is the meaning of Memorial Day as it relates to the State of the Past. From this study of our contributions to the State of the Past we shall draw experience and inspiration for our contributions to the State of the Present. For, in a free State, not only the demands of patriotism, but also the qualifications of good citizenship require that those who control and direct the affairs of the State shall be familiar with the ideas and events that have shaped its destiny. In such a State every citizen is a director in its affairs, and from time to time is called upon to decide great questions that will affect the welfare of the remotest posterity. In his hands he holds the fate of political parties, he controls public policies, he formulates social creeds, he solves educational problems, he determines great industrial issues;—in a word, he forms public opinion, and in free States public opinion rules politicians, governs social conduct, regulates industrial affairs, and shapes the desti-

nies of the people. This much at least every citizen must pay for the privilege of his citizenship, and if he is a patriotic citizen, intent upon the conscientious performance of his duty, he needs as the foundation stone of his citizenship, a knowledge of the Past.

But men say, the Past is dead; and we are practical men who live in the Present. What need have we for the dead Past? The Past is not dead. "The roots of the Present lie deep in the Past, and nothing in the Past is dead to the man who would understand how the Present came to be what it is." The Present was born of the Past and is the parent of the Future. Every problem which this practical man is called upon to solve comes to him out of the Past, moulded into shape by its influence and charged with its spirit. If your problem be to choose between candidates for public office, can you not choose the better for a knowledge of their Past? If it be to remodel an institution, can you not perform your task more intelligently if you know how the institution was formed and whence it grew? If it be to formulate a social creed, can you not proceed more wisely if you are familiar with the fifty social creeds that have arisen and vanished before? If it be to determine an educational policy, can you not act more advisedly after investigating an hundred policies that have been put to the test? If it be to settle an industrial issue, can you not decide it more safely if you know its origin and the history of its growth? To put these questions is to answer them. And yet how often do even wise men overlook this truth, and consulting their invention and rejecting their experience, blunder along in their blindness until they find that every step taken in advance seems to be hurled back by some silent and unnoticed power, and their enthusiasm gives way to despair and their hopes fade into recollections. Frederic Harrison puts a very pertinent and



practical question, then, when he asks: "What is this unseen power which seems to undo the best human efforts, as if it were some overbearing weight against which no man can struggle? What is this ever-acting force which seems to revive the dead, to restore what we destroy, to renew forgotten watchwords, exploded fallacies, discredited doctrines, and condemned institutions; against which enthusiasm, intellect, truth, high purpose, and self-devotion seem to beat themselves to death in vain? It is the Past. It is the accumulated wills and works of all mankind around us and before us. It is civilization. It is that power which to understand is strength, which to repudiate is weakness."<sup>1</sup>

Surely no people in all the history of the world have had more reason to be impressed with these truths than we Americans of the Southern States. We have seen a triumphant people, flushed with victory and drunk with power, attempt to remodel every institution of these states in defiance of all the lessons of ten centuries of English history. We have seen them erect a political structure that turned back the wheel of time a thousand years. We have seen them formulate a social creed that flew into the face of all civilization. We have seen them plan an industrial scheme that gave the lie to the teachings of history throughout the ages. And we have seen them all, institutions, political structure, social ideals, and industrial schemes, though supported by the arms of a victorious nation, rise in the night only to fall crushed and destroyed in the day, leaving as their contributions to the State naught but the

". . . . . sword and fire,  
Red ruin, and the breaking up of laws."

Crushed and destroyed, not because they were evil, evil though they were, but destroyed because they were not born

---

<sup>1</sup> Frederic Harrison's *Meaning of History* has been a fruitful source of suggestion in the preparation of this address.



of the Past. The best work of some of the truest reformers in the history of the world has not been exempt from a similar fate. Indeed, the whole path of civilization is strewn with the wrecks of institutions, social and religious creeds, political and industrial schemes, to which millions looked for the cure of all human ills and upon which they founded their hopes of human happiness—wrecked because their roots were not sunk deep in the teachings of the Past. The Past is the conservative, steadying, guiding power in the Present; and the Present without the influence of the Past would be as unsteady in its motions, as helpless to guide its course, and as uncertain of its goal as a ship without sails, ballast or rudder. No pilot is fit to be entrusted with control of a ship who is ignorant of his chart, and no crew who are indifferent to their chart need hope to reach their haven safely: so no man is fit to be entrusted with control of the Present who is ignorant of the Past, and no people who are indifferent to their Past need hope to make their Future great.

For this State of the Future Memorial Day has a yet deeper meaning. Paradoxical as this may seem, it is yet necessarily true. All our aims and ambitions and hopes look to the Future. That State-pride which the study of the Past cultivates, is a meaningless vanity if it does not inspire in us high and splendid ideals for the State of the Future. That equipment for service which such study develops, has but little purpose if it does enable us the better to realize those ideals. If we shall find that the contributions made by our fathers to the State of the Past were good, shall we not resolve that our contributions to the State of the Future shall be better? If we shall find that they have left to us a noble heritage, shall we not determine to leave to our children a yet richer legacy? If we shall find that they were ready without thought of self to bear the burdens of the State and

equipped to do its service, shall we falter because we too have burdens to bear and services to perform? No State ever called her people into her service with greater confidence in their spirit of willingness and determination than North Carolina in 1861; and no people ever responded with a more absolute forgetfulness of self in their duty to their country.

In like manner the State of the Future is calling us into her service; and shall we not respond in like spirit? No invading foe threatens us with a foreign tyranny, no bugle calls us to arms in her defense; but there are other tyrannies none the less oppressive, other duties none the less important. There is the tyranny of ignorance, the tyranny of poverty, the tyranny of a backward industrial life, the tyranny of prejudice, the tyranny of intolerance. There are schools to be supported, resources to be developed, fields to be cultivated, prejudices to be overthrown, truth and justice to be established:—all great problems that have come to us out of the Past. What then has the Past to teach us with regard to their solution?

The Past will teach us that since the dawn of civilization, Ignorance has contributed nothing to the progress of mankind or the amelioration of his condition. Hence we shall learn that the supreme duty of the State of the Future is the education of her children:—not some of her children, but every child of them, without regard to its sex or condition, its wealth or poverty, its race or color. Ignorance is no respecter of persons. It chooses its agents regardless of their race, color or previous condition of servitude. It is thoroughly democratic. It strikes through the ruler in the seat of power; it strikes through the money king on his throne of gold; it strikes through the beggar on the street. It is as blind as justice itself. The scholar in his study, the man with the hoe, the banker and the merchant, the manufacturer

and the mechanic, the editor and the teacher, the lawyer and the farmer, all feel the deadening effects of its blows, and everywhere they fall they leave behind a trail of poverty and failure and suffering. It flaunts itself in our faces to-day with all the arrogance of long entrenched power, and dares us to more terrific battles, and invites us to more glorious victories than were ever won by the Confederate soldier. And as the State of the Past called to our fathers in the sixties, so the State of the Future is calling to us to-day: "Bring up all your corps of truth and light and power. Open all your batteries and sound the onset, for the conflict is now on with the enemy. The powers of ignorance and darkness are arrayed against us, and the fight must be to a finish."

The Past will teach us that material resources—unlimited water-power, boundless forests, inexhaustible minerals, fertile soil, and genial climate—contribute nothing to the wealth or the power of a people who do not know how to use them. Gettysburg and Appomattox taught this lesson with fearful emphasis. For behind the armies of the South were neglected fields, unopened mines, impassable highways, unexplored forests, and rivers that sent their waters unfettered to the sea; behind the armies of the North were farms that intelligent labor had converted into blooming gardens, rivers that had been harnessed to the spindle and the loom, mines that had been made to yield up their secret treasures, forests that gave their timbers to be fashioned into a thousand useful forms, and great arteries of trade and commerce that carried life and vigor into the uttermost parts of the country. In 1865, the armies of Lee and Johnston surrendered, not to the armies of Grant and Sherman who faced them on the fields of Virginia and Carolina, but to the mills and factories that dotted the river banks of New England, to the open mines that poured their riches into the laps of California and

Pennsylvania, to the railroads and highways that brought the produce of the world to the doors of New York and Chicago and Philadelphia. History teaches no lesson more forcibly than the lesson that Providence does not long tolerate a people who neglect the gifts of Nature. And so in the State of the Future, before we can come into our inheritance, we too must learn how to harness the waters of our streams to the wheels of mills and factories, how to go down into the bowels of the earth and bring up the hidden treasures, how to penetrate the depths of the forests and take out the timbers with foresight and intelligence, how to tunnel the mountain and bridge the gorge for great railroads and highways of commerce and travel,—in a word, we must learn how to use the natural wealth that a generous Creator has poured into our lap, or become the hewers of wood and drawers of water for those who do know how to use them.

The Past will teach us that no State ever grew strong or prosperous except through the strength and prosperity of the great toiling masses of its people. Hence we shall learn that in the State of the Future, the eighty per cent of her people who cultivate the soil, and not the twenty per cent who live in towns, will determine her power and wealth. The great economic problem of this State, then, as Mr. Poe puts it, is not the building of towns and cities, but the increasing of the earning capacity of her average farm at least \$500 a year, thus giving to it a productive power equal to the farms in other sections of our common country. In order to accomplish this, as Dr. Knapp says: "We must rebuild our wasted soils; restore the valuable woods to our forests; construct economic and enduring highways; substitute in the country substantial structures of brick or stone for our frail tenement of wood; the meadows must send their fragrance to the valleys; the fruit trees must cover the hilltops with bloom; the schoolhouse, the church and the factory must gladden the

view from every summit. We must build a more complete and enduring rural civilization where strong and vigorous manhood is reared and where the purest and rarest forms of womanhood are in bloom. \* \* \* Every idle acre of land must be made to produce; every idle man and woman must be drafted into the army of toil; extravagance and waste must cease; intelligence must dominate matter; and universal vigor must take up the tasks of general frailty."<sup>1</sup> Our industrial Lees and Jacksons must lead their armies of toilers against the foes that are beating back from the rural sections the comforts and conveniences and pleasures of modern life.

The Past will teach us that "the supreme test of natural as well as individual virtue is not prowess in combat, but what the victor does to the vanquished after the conquest is over, what the strong do to the weak who have fallen under their power." In the State of the Future we shall have to deal with a weaker race who have fallen under our power, and as sure as there is a God of Nations who holds the fate of States in His hands, so surely will He call us to an account of our guardianship of this child of Nature. Let us beware lest in our dealings with him pride and prejudice and passion shall usurp the place of kindness and sympathy and justice. He knows but little of the checks and balances of human society who does not know that if the strong do not pull up the weak, the weak must pull down the strong; and if we must err, far better for us if we err on the side of justice. For, says a distinguished judge, "on our capacity to do justice to them [the negroes] in private dealing as well as in public action depend in a large degree our character and future life as a people. For the doing of injustice is more direful in its effects on the doer, than on the sufferer. He is no patriot who does not stand up for the right of every man

---

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Seaman A. Knapp in an address before the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly at Charlotte, 1908.

to have the just reward of his labor, to have the right of trial for his life, his liberty and property under the guidance of the law of the land, who is not ready to breast any storm to see that there shall be one law for the weak and the strong.”<sup>1</sup>

The Past will teach us that no State has ever survived the assaults of time that was not built on the solid corner stones of truth and justice and equality of opportunity for all men. We shall learn too that there can be no truth without freedom of thought, no justice without freedom of discussion, no equality of opportunity without freedom of action. Every tyranny that has oppressed mankind since the beginning of history, whether it be the tyranny of autocracy, the tyranny of aristocracy, or the tyranny of democracy, flourished on intolerance of free thought, on suppression of free speech, and on denial of free action. In the State of the Future we must set our faces like flint against every tendency to encourage those servants of tyranny. We must learn to expose every question affecting the welfare of the State to the searching light of free and full discussion, and to abide the judgment of the people. But we must learn also that hackneyed oratory is not discussion, denunciation is not criticism, license is not freedom. We must learn that judgments rendered at the dictation of passion and prejudice are not likely to be “true and righteous altogether.” We must learn that ideas are greater than persons, and principles more enduring than personalities. We must learn that as true liberty is liberty regulated by law, so nothing is more important to the people of a self-governing State than that stern and splendid regard for law which was the glory of Rome in her best days, and without which no people can be truly great or truly free. And, finally, we must learn that while eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal agitation is not eternal vigilance.

---

<sup>1</sup>Judge C. A. Woods, of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, in an address before the North Carolina Bar Association, 1908.



Not till we have taken these lessons to heart shall the door of opportunity be thrown wide open to every child of the State; not till then shall Justice be enthroned in all the beauty of righteousness; and not till then shall "Truth, shining patiently like a star, bid us advance and we will not turn aside."

To educate the children of the State, to develop her resources, to revolutionize her industrial and agricultural systems, to maintain her authority, to preserve her freedom,—these are great problems that have come to us out of the Past; to solve them is the work of the Future. We shall not solve them without the expenditure of much money and toil and sacrifice. But to this labor the State is calling her best sons, and shall we shrink from her call? Consider the Confederate soldier. The one sentiment that overshadowed all others in his heart was devotion to his State. For the State he lived, and in her defense he went forth to die. He knew no duty above his duty to the State, and he coveted no honor save the honor of the State. No labor was too hard, no burden too heavy, no sacrifice too great in her behalf. When she called him into her service, he invented no excuse, he uttered no murmur, he asked no reward. Inspired by his pride in her achievements, he imagined no greater joy than to share in the brightness of her glory; and warmed by her love, he sought no other fate than to go down with her in the darkness of defeat. If in the same spirit we too shall answer the call of the State of the Future, we may rest assured that we shall not go down with her in the darkness of defeat, but that we shall rejoice with her in the brightness of her glory.

Such, then, is that freer and nobler State that came triumphant out of the conflict of the sixties. Out of that conflict came also, as I have said, a more perfect and a more enduring Union—a Union of States, not of sections; of States sprung from a common source, created for a common purpose, and builded on a common foundation; a Union of



States bound together by the history and traditions of a common Past, united in the work of a common Present, and destined to the glories of a common Future. For this Union, Memorial Day, whether it honors the memory of those who followed Lee or the memory of those who followed Grant, has its final and deepest meaning. We shall not come to the observance of Memorial Day in the right spirit if our purpose be to rekindle the fires of bitter memories or of sectional animosities. But rather let us come in that spirit which declares: "The sons will preserve and will magnify the fame of their fathers, but they will not foster or fight over again their feuds, since the fathers themselves . . . . long ago renounced rancor and dissolved differences. . . . . We will filially honor the shades of our ancestors, but we will not cut ourselves among their tombs. . . . . Our fathers fought out the questions which their fathers left unsettled. We recognize and rejoice in the settlement of those questions. But we are resolved that neither the charm of historical study, nor the passions, nor the pathos of poetry, nor the pious exaltation which shrines excite and monuments inspire shall to-day hold back North and South from the new and noble obligations, and from the benign and brotherly competitions of this teeming time. Better a decade of love and peace than a cycle of the mutilations and of the memories of the Civil War."<sup>1</sup>

In such a spirit the Confederate soldier, after four long years of conflict, submitted to the judgment of the God of battles; and in such a spirit the Nation will yet acknowledge the great debt which it owes to him. He fought the war in good faith, he laid down his arms in good faith, and he accepted the result in good faith. No apology for his course arose to his lips to belie his conscience; no vain regret lin-

---

<sup>1</sup>St. Clair McKelway, in an address before The Conference for Education in the South at Richmond, Va., 1903.

gered in his heart to embitter his spirit. He turned from the battle-field to his civic duties feeling "malice toward none," but "charity for all"; ready to lend his hands to the task of binding up the Nation's wounds; and determined to contribute by voice and conduct toward establishing and cherishing a just and lasting peace between the torn and bleeding sections. Keeping always in view the harmony, peace and happiness of the whole country, joining in the desire of all good men everywhere to hush forever the passions and prejudices of civil strife, disdaining to renounce his own faith or principles but willing to trust his vindication to

"That flight of ages which are God's  
Own voice to justify the dead,"

he called on all sections of his country to ignore sectional issues, and to address themselves to the task of restoring the Union in heart and soul. The wisdom and prudence, the saneness and patience, the loyalty and patriotism which have characterized his course since the war, entitle him to a warm place in the Nation's heart forever.

And, to-day, as we gather to do honor to his memory, shall we not resolve to follow his example and emulate his spirit? Let us bury forever the bitter memories, and the passions and the prejudices left in the wake of sectional strife, and join heart and soul with all throughout our common country who pay tribute to those, whatever banner they may have followed, who unselfishly answered the call of duty as God gave them to see and understand it. On this Memorial Day, dear to our hearts for the memories it brings, the gallant spirits of Federal and Confederate, who so freely gave of their best blood in the service of their country, call to us to give as freely of ourselves to our great reunited Nation, and in the service of that Nation to think the highest that is in us to think, to do the best that is in us to do, and to be the noblest that is in us to be.







